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WORKS IN PROGRESS

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

Port Militarization Resistance

We must act locally and directly to stop the US Occupation of Iraq

by Molly Gibbs

Having recently returned from Washington DC, and listening to House and Senate hearings on C-SPAN, I believe our Federal government has failed. Both the Congress and the office of the Presidency are dysfunctional to the degree that the corporate system on which their power is based must be challenged.

The only people who can do that are you and I.

That's a large undertaking—requiring a new electoral system, reflective of the will of the people, reinstatement of laws, habeas corpus, civil rights, and the abolition of torture, signing statements, spying on citizens, and lying as the preferred executive privilege.

Seventy percent of Americans oppose escalating ongoing wars and occupation. Did anyone hear Senator Byrd announce that our treasury is bankrupt?

Recently, an 80-year-old Korean War veteran, a 70-year-old, 63-year-old, myself and two in their 20s tried to meet with Senator Cantwell. The sign greeting us said "This Door is LOCKED." Two aides met us in the hallway where we were forced to stand while talking. When I asked how we could effectively address the depth of concern for soldiers being deployed, we were told, "You need to accept the parameters of the political system."

Politics is all about corporate power. I learned in DC that the average amount of money a Senator needs to sustain a term in office is $50,000 *per week*.

No wonder our voices are met with words that mean nothing changes. It's all about money, stupid: Boeing, Lockheed-Martin, ExxonMobil, Chevron, Halliburton, Bechtel and Bearing Point.

> Using the Port of Olympia to ship equipment to Iraq goes against the will of the majority in the US and within our community. Therefore, we have a democratic responsibility to resist.

The US will never leave Iraq until the Production Sharing Agreements are signed (US–Iraqi Parliament is voting on them in March) and the new Iraq Foreign Oil Ministry is in place. 70–100% of the oil will go to foreign oil corporations. Maybe the Iraqi people will control up to 30%. There is still no clean water and little electricity or fuel in Baghdad. There is a steady 70% unemployment rate and over 1.6 million refugees. We can't leave until we control more than 17 of the 80 oilfields yet to be developed.

We don't talk about what it means to be an aggressive empire, what it means to take impeachment off the table. Think Office of the Presidency. Before I went to DC Lt Ehren Watada looked me in the eye and asked, "What do you think would have happened if Richard Nixon had been indicted, rather than having resigned?" Indeed, I believe Hillary Clinton will continue the abuses of power initiated by this president, who has far expanded those of Reagan, Nixon, Johnson and Clinton. Remembering, of course, that rather than accountability for NAFTA–CAFTA–WTO crimes, Clinton was impeached for non-impeachable offenses. Hence the timidity of this Congress, which is unable to distinguish between High Crimes, like violations of the Constitution and international law, and personal behavior. While his sexual behavior may have been immoral or inappropriate, it in no way threatened his ability to govern.

The system is broken. We the people must act locally. The potential consequences of war on Iran are too horrific to allow.

The Strykers that will deploy to Iraq in the next few weeks are *part* of Bush's escalation In Olympia, a large well-organized group called Port Militarization Resistance plans to block this shipment. This poses no harm to the troops currently in Iraq, unless one believes that the escalation will help those already over there. Allowing troops currently safe and secure at Ft. Lewis to deploy to Iraq puts them at high risk of death or injury. This is certainly *not* to support these

▸ **Resist** continued on page 7

First week at Camp Quixote

by Ray Kavick

My name is Ray Kavick, anarchist and member of the Olympia Poor People's Union (PPU). This is a short reflection on the first week of an encampment we set up in Downtown Olympia on Thursday, February 1. We called the encampment Camp Quixote. This piece is not that comprehensive, but gets the basic story out there. My comments do not represent those of the PPU. The PPU is a non-hierarchical group dedicated to improving the lives of the poor and "homeless" in Olympia by whatever means available.

The first tents were awkwardly set up with the people at the campsite looking over their shoulders every once in a while. I felt that many of us were waiting for the police to come immediately. During the planning meetings, it was assumed by nearly everybody that we would be at the site for an hour at most. When the first five tents went up and an hour had passed, none of us were completely sure what to do. But that soon passed, the group got together and we decided to go ahead and put as many tents and as many people on the site as quickly as possible.

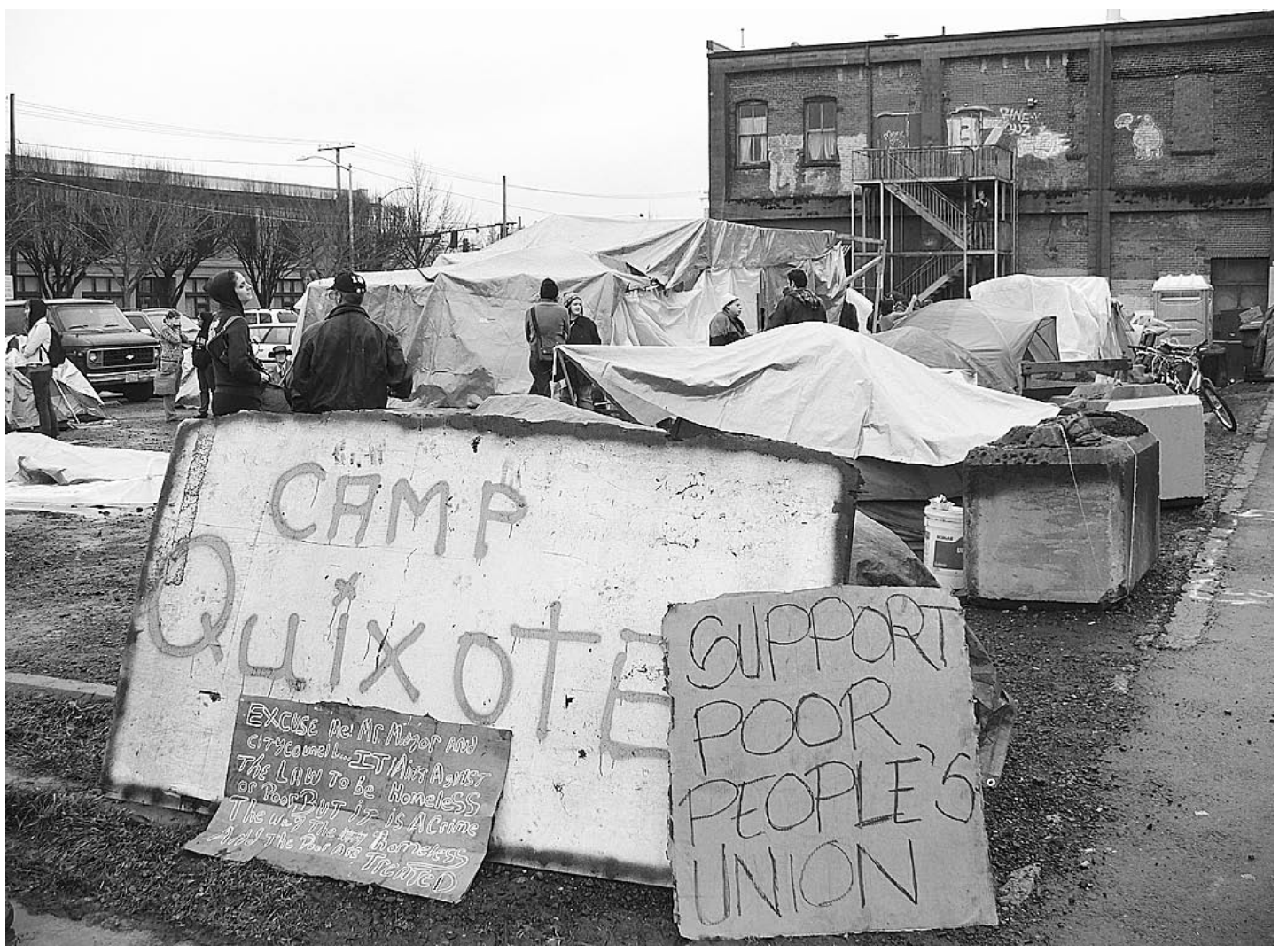
A local group called the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace held sit-ins at two locations that day protesting the laws that the city passed banning sitting, panhandling or performing on Olympia sidewalks. Once it was over, many of them came down and hung out with us. People passing by stopped to see what was going on. The energy was beginning to grow in the small, gravel-and-mud parking lot. The tents continued to be erected, we made a few pallet runs in order to get the tents off the ground, different musicians came by and played for us and random people dropped off food. A port-a-potty arrived by truck later in the day. The cops were nowhere to be seen.

By nightfall, the group was operating smoothly and the unity we had talked about and hoped for in the meetings was materializing. Once the fear of the police had subsided, we all threw ourselves headlong into the undertaking and the sense of excitement among the group gave us all a small, constant buzz. We were no longer doing something "illegal," we were doing what we needed to do. If something needed to be taken care of, people got up and did it. Whenever someone needed something, we gave it to them, or tried to. At the end of that day, the hope I had for the encampment multiplied exponentially.

The next day, in our local newspaper, we were on the cover. The *Olympian* was telling everyone that we set up the camp to "protest" the new laws. While all of us despised the laws, we did not do this to "protest" anything. We did this to create what we needed: housing and a sense of community. But it was easier for the *Olympian* to label us as "protesters," something they are still doing.

Anyway, that day brought the media, along with more people, more food and

▸ **Quixote** continued on page 4



Camp Quixote in its original downtown location, February 7, 2007. Photo by Sandy Mayes

WORKS IN PROGRESS

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WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number.

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Send submissions to *wip@zhonka.net* or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

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We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues
Get your catalog of indexed *WIP*'s below. Some back issues are available in the Timberland Library system. *WIP* is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

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On the cover: Camp Quixote in its original location at the corner of State and Columbia. Photo by Tony Zaragosa.

WIP Schedule

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Grassroots, Nonviolent Resistance to Israeli Apartheid in Palestine

Tues., Mar. 6, at 7:00 pm at St. Martin's Worthington Conference Center, 5300 Pacific Avenue SE, Lacey.

All are invited to a talk presented by two leaders of the Palestinian nonviolent resistance movement whose struggles have received worldwide attention, Feryal Abu Haikal and Mohammed Khatib. Haikal and Khatib will speak of their personal experiences mobilizing their communities to nonviolently resist occupation and discrimination. Mohammed Khatib is a leading member of the Popular Committee Against the Wall. He has been a principal organizer of Bil'in's two-year creative, non-violent struggle to prevent the construction of Israel 's Apartheid Wall, and the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements. Feryal Abu Haikal, an educator and a 60 year-old mother of eleven children, recently retired as the headmistress at the Qurtuba School in Hebron. The school serves 100 Palestinian children, and serves as a model of nonviolent resistance to Israeli occupation.

Sponsored by the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice in cooperation with St. Martin's University.

Call (360) 754-3998 for more information.

Dolores Huerta, Co-Founder of United Farm Workers Union, to Speak

Thurs., Mar. 8, at 12pm at Evergreen, Library Building Room 4300

and at 7:00 pm on at Traditions Fair Trade

Dolores Huerta co-founded the United Farm Worker's Union with César Chávez. She was the first vice president of the union and is the most prominent Chicana labor leader in the United States. Dolores directed the UFW's national grape boycott that resulted in the entire California table grape industry signing a three-year collective bargaining agreement with the United Farm Workers. In 1974 she was instrumental in securing unemployment benefits for farm workers. In 1985 Dolores lobbied against federal guest worker programs and spearheaded legislation granting amnesty for farm workers that had lived, worked, and paid taxes in the United States for many years but unable to enjoy the privileges of citizenship. This resulted in the Immigration Act of 1985 in which 1,400,000 farm workers received amnesty. Presentation by Rochelle Gause to follow. (See below.)

$3-10 suggested donation.

Report back on Oaxaca's Popular Uprising

Thurs., Mar. 8, at 8:30 pm at Traditions Fair Trade

Olympia resident Rochelle Gause will share her first-hand account of the struggle in Oaxaca, Mexico from her 5 months in the region. Through photos, video clips, and stories, Rochelle will share the spirit and creativity of the teachers' strike turned full-scale popular rebellion that managed to take control of the city for multiple months. Her presentation will cover the media and government building takeovers, the 1800 neighborhood barricades, the formation of the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO), and the brutal repression and assassinations at the hands of paramilitaries and police.

Rochelle's presentation is sponsored by the TSTSCA (Thurston-Santo Tomás Sister County Association) and is to follow Dolores Huerta, who will speak at 7pm.

An HIV/AIDS Awareness Day for Women and Girls

Sat., Mar. 10, at 9:00 am through 3:00 pm at the United Churches, 110-11th Avenue SE in Olympia.

The second annual Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Conference aims to empower women and girls with information about sexual health and HIV/AIDS. United Communities AIDS Network (UCAN), with the support of the Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health-Region X, is hosting.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is a growing and persistent health threat to women and girls in the United States. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), from 1999 through 2003, the annual number of estimated AIDS cases among women increased 15% while it increased 1% among men. Women's rates of infection, especially those of women of color and young women, continue to rise. Currently, women make up approximately 27% of national HIV/AIDS cases.

For more information, visit www.ucan-wa.org.

Public Forum: How we can get our democracy back with Public Financing of Campaigns!

Sat., Mar. 10, from 3:00 to 4:30 pm, at the Matrix Coffee House, 434 NW Prindle St., Chehalis

This will be a Speaker Presentation & a video narrated by Bill Moyers, titled "Road to Clean Elections." Introduction to public financing of election campaigns, with the short video "Road to Clean Elections," narrated by Bill Moyers, and information about how we can make this happen in Washington!

Free and open to the public: all interested citizens are invited to attend.

For Information contact: Jacqui Brown Miller 360-236-9684 orjacquiAfD@comcast.net . Call the Matrix at (360)740-0492.

WROC and Roll Potluck and Roller Skating Party

Sat., Mar. 31, at 6:00 pm at the Hall of the Woods, 3712 Sapp Rd.
Call WROC about carpooling 352-9716

A benefit for Monarch Children's Justice and Advocacy Center With the Total Experience Gospel Choir and the Righteous Mothers

Sat., Mar. 31 at at 8:00 pm, at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts.

The Total Experience Gospel Choir is made up of people of all ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds, and has won over 150 regional, national and international awards.

For ticket information call 360-753-8586.

!Raccoon Radio! A weekly, Northwest audio zine is now airing

Mondays at 1:00 pm on Free Radio Olympa, 98.5FM
Wednesdays at 8:00 pm on KOWA 106.5FM

!Raccoon Radio! is produced locally and much of the content is Olympia based, covering culture, politics, music and more. If you would like your group or music featured on !Raccoon Radio!, or if you know of any events or stories we should cover, email raccoonsrock@gmail.com. We are also looking for folks interested in audio recording, experienced or not that would like to help out in the production of !Raccoon Radio! Recent shows have covered poverty and homelessness, labor issues, cross border solidarity, activist art and much more.

Thurston County Seeks Volunteers to Become "Master Recyclers"

Over the course of one month, program participants learn about the fate of solid waste in Thurston County, different methods of recycling (including composting), and a variety of waste reduction tips and techniques. Class sessions feature written materials, multimedia presentations, speakers, and field trips. In exchange for approximately 18 hours of classroom and field training, Master Recyclers are asked to "pay back" 36 hours through any number of volunteer activities over the next year helping at County-sponsored workshops, recycling events, and informational booths – or working on recycling and waste reduction issues in local schools or their workplaces.

The 2007 training session will tentatively begin in March, and interested persons will receive details on the finalized class schedule. Class size for the Master Recycler Training program is limited, so sign up soon! For more information, contact Mark Koster, program coordinator, at (360) 754-3355 x6785, or visit the Master Recycle

Full Family Sanction: Faces and Voices From the Welfare Zone

An exhibit of photos and audio stories from from Washington families facing welfare cuts. Bryce's Barbershop, 118 4th Avenue. The exhibit will be available for the month of March during barbershop hours, roughly Tuesday - Friday 10-ish to 5:00 pm, and Saturday mornings.

If you are a parent facing sanction and need to know your rights, please contact us!

Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition
701 Franklin Street SE
Olympia, WA 98501
(360)352-9716
toll free (866)343-9716
www.wroc.org
http://www.myspace.com/olywroc

March 2007

Leahy-Bond Insurrection Act

"...the Bush administration inserted two provisions into last October's defense budget bill that would make it easier to declare martial law in the US...the introduction of these changes amounts, not to an attack on the Congress and the balance of power, but to a particular and concerted attack on the citizens of the nation. Bush is laying the legal groundwork to repeal even the appearance of democracy. Senators Leahy and Bond have introduced a bill to repeal these changes, and it is important that voters keep track of this bill and hold their Congresspeople to account on it. Any senator who does not vote in favor of the Leahy/Bond repeal of these provisions should promptly be recalled by his or her constituents." **Jane Smiley**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Monday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Posse Comitatus: "was enshrined in law after the Civil War to preserve the line between civil government and the military." **Insurrection Act of 1807:** "provides major exemptions to posse comitatus. It essentially limits a president's use of the military in law enforcement to putting down lawlessness, insurrection and rebellion, where a state is violating federal law or depriving people of constitutional rights." New York Times editorial, Making Martial Law Easier, 19 Feb 2007				**1** **2006:** Bush to give India nuclear info and fuel even though India won't sign Nonproliferation Treaty	**2** **2002:** Fighting increases in Afghanistan **2003:** CIA retracts reports of dissent among N Korean elite	**3** **1871:** House unhappy not to be in treaty process passes bill declaring Native nations no longer sovereign
4 **1998:** Puerto Rico to vote in special referendum: commonwealth status, statehood or independence	**5** **2006:** NY Times analysis indicates parent notification laws have no effect on teen pregnancy/ abortion rates	**6** **2003:** Bush tells allies to get ready to go to war; "We really don't need anybody's permission"	**7** **1936:** Hitler orders his troops to march into the Rhineland, breaking the Treaty of Versailles and the Locarno Pact	**8** **1917:** Riots/strikes begin Russian Revolution **2003:** Olympia: Women/ Childrens Peace Vigil form a peace sign	**9** **1989:** 1st time in history, senate denies a president a nomination for his first cabinet: John Tower for secretary of defense	**10** **2001:** Oly cops arrest 4 of 15 people walking down Washington St banging drums and wearing raincoats
11 **2003:** The airline industry asks for tax relief in case US invades Iraq and people stop flying	**12** **2000:** Pope John Paul II asks forgiveness for the wrong committed by Roman Catholics through the ages	**13** **1998:** Sgt Maj McKinney cleared of sexual misconduct charges, but guilty of urging 1 victim to lie	**14** **1999:** U of W announces black applications to law school has declined 41 percent since passage of I-200	**15** **1998:** Kathleen Willey says on "60 minutes" Clinton groped/kissed her while she at White House to ask for a job	**16** **1995:** Ivan the Gorilla steps outside for the first time in 30 years at Zoo Atlanta's African Rain Forest	**17** **2006:** Judge to allow feds into Google's search engine, but not to lists of people's search requests
18 **2006:** 500,000 across France protest gov plan to let companies fire young workers without giving a reason	**19** **2003:** War protester arrested after he padlocks himself to an Olympia office building w/ federal agencies	**20** **2006:** On the third anniversary of the invasion Bush says the 'strategy' to clear insurgents from Iraq 'is working'	**21** **2006:** Programs run by Christian conservatives who share Bush's social values receive $157 million in fed grants	**22** **2006:** US Supreme Court upholds Georgia law requiring police to get consent of both adults to search home	**23** **2003:** Michael Moore protests the war when accepting his Oscar for Bowling for Columbine	**24** **2006:** New study finds deaths linked to California smog might be double or triple previously thought
25 **2006:** 500,000 march through LA against pending federal bill that would make illegal immigration a felony	**26** **2006:** 1/31/2003 memo proves Bush/Blair knew there were no WMDs and discussed how to provoke confrontation	**27** **1995:** Olympia School Board hears testimony regarding planned speech by Col. Cammermeyer	**28** **2000:** Supreme Court rules an officer cannot stop and frisk a pedestrian based on an anonymous tip	**29** **2006:** Ex-Liberian president Charles Taylor was arrested while trying to flee Nigeria with large bags of cash	**30** **1996:** Gov Mike Lowry vetoes ban on death row inmate organ transplants, "clearly unconstitutional"	**31** **2006:** EPA proposes to lower drinking water standards because small towns can't afford to meet current ones

The Poor People's Union declares victory — and prepares for the next stage

by Tony Zaragoza

The Poor People's Union (PPU) won a standoff with Olympia city officials. Despite ongoing objections from the City, the PPU won the right to reestablish the tent city, Camp Quixote, on a new site. According to one of the organizers of Camp Quixote, Rob Richards, "This is a major victory. We get to stay together. We get a place for now, and dialogue has been opened for a permanent site. We developed leadership, organization, and a plan. Now we're getting ready for what comes next."

On Feb. 1, the day that the City of Olympia banned sitting, panhandling or performing on public sidewalks, the PPU set up a tent city in downtown Olympia. Over the next seven days, the encampment grew to 50 people with 25 tents, a kitchen, portable toilet and communal hall. Throughout that time, residents organized trash brigades to clean up the neighborhood, made decisions collectively, and banned drugs and alcohol. Support came from throughout Olympia.

During the standoff, as poor people organized to demand their rights, local government and police threatened to destroy what was built. According to a PPU press release, "Our crime is acting independently and effectively, being organized, and caring for all the people of this community especially each other—those without permanent shelter." Tim, an organizer with the PPU, emphasized the importance of the tent city, "This is about basic human rights. This is like the civil rights movement for poor people. People are isolated out in the woods—out of sight, out of mind. But here together we're safe and able to accomplish a lot."

> The City wanted the camp community to simply scatter and disappear.

On Feb. 6, the city manager and police chief entered the camp and gave a verbal order to disperse. At the City Council meeting that night, City officials made it clear that they were not going to change their minds: the camp had to go and could not be set up anywhere else. The City wanted the camp community to simply scatter and disappear.

The day after the city council meeting, Carol Harmon, a PPU member, was arrested on a two-year-old warrant after she vocally challenged the city council about their threats to shut down Camp Quixote, "I'm one of the homeless people you're trying to run out of town, but I'm not going anywhere."

City officials, concerned primarily with development and tourism, sought to defend property over people. The city government showed little concern for poor people. On Feb. 8, the City distributed fliers: on one side it promised the arrest of Camp Quixote residents and on the other listed phone numbers for shelters. Many at the camp felt insulted and suggested that the numbers were a PR gesture. According to Kandace Jones, an organizer with the PPU, "They gave us a bunch of numbers for referral services. Most of the numbers are for places that don't have any available space and some of the numbers don't even work. They don't care about us."

Jones went on to say, "The goals of Camp Quixote are to get people and the City to realize that there is no option left for us. We want land that's ours, that we can build on, that the people can run. Real democracy—not this sham and police threats. We are people."

Jesse Shultz, a PPU member, explained further, "We have millions living on the streets around this country. We have rights. We are here to demand our rights: the right to freedom of assembly, to housing and to live. If you structure society in this way, you should expect [tent cities] like ours."

The American people have to demand that this country provide adequate housing for all people—but the fight is also bigger. Homelessness in this system is incurable. It results from the elimination of jobs by corporations looking for the cheapest labor and using automated production that eliminates the need for workers. The fight for housing is an important part of building a movement for a new society based on human need, not private property and corporate profit.

Tony Zaragoza teaches Political Economy at The Evergreen State College. This article was originally printed in the People's Tribune, **www.peoplestribune.org** .

▸ **Quixote** continued from page 1

more tents. There was no word on the police, but in the paper the City Council expressed anger at us for being "ungrateful" for all the City had done for the "homeless." Everyone laughed at this and the day went on. We set up a communal tent to store food and serve as a makeshift kitchen. An *Olympian* photographer and reporter wandered through the camp. The City manager, Steve Hall, came by and informed us that this action represented a "poke in the eye" to the City. I suppose he thought this would fill us with shame and make us leave. Later in the day, the Seattle TV stations came down and began filming.

A few us felt a sense of disgust and anger upon seeing them but we put it aside in order to get the word out about what we were doing, accepting that our message would get skewed. I was to discover later, however, that the Seattle stations gave us pretty decent coverage, probably because they weren't worried about upsetting the wing-nuts, wealthy business owners and rich City Council members of Olympia as much as the *Olympian* was.

It was ridiculously cold that second night. A few people brought a barbeque down and some coals, being that burning a fire to keep warm was forbidden to us. Later, even burning coal was made "illegal." The cops had started driving by regularly earlier that day, going up and down the alley next to the camp. It got down to 22 degrees Fahrenheit that night.

The next three days brought us a number of things which I will tackle in no meaningful order. A communal hall was built with lumber donated from a local salvage company; it was draped in tarps and became an awesome little spot for us to hang out. Our kitchen was expanded and a fantastic fellow acted as our cook, making food that blew out what the Starvation Army dished out. In the hall we had communal food and tobacco, with new donations coming all the time. We shared everything there. A few people were a little reluctant to share their tents and some people got mad at the positioning of certain tents, but the problems were handled without much friction. I have not felt so at ease in a long time. I will probably say it again, but this was a small slice of the kind of community and future many of us dream of. Some of you may give me shit, but I wanted to cry a few times for absolutely no rational reason.

> While all of us despised the laws, we did not do this to "protest" anything. We did this to create what we needed: housing and a sense of community.

Those three days also brought the City Council meeting and the first real worry of the police raiding us. The PPU planned to go as a group to the Council meeting and flood it, but it occurred to many of us that this would be an opportune moment for the police to come. So those who could be arrested stayed at the camp and those who could not went to the meeting. Quite a few people spoke during the public comment section of the meeting, and one of those people was a woman named Carol. She ripped into the Council and expressed her outrage toward what they were doing. We didn't get raided that night, but Carol was later arrested.

She had a warrant out for her, but the police knew she was in town since it was issued. This arrest was purely political in nature. Someone who angrily denounced the Council was in jail the next day. I am sure this disgusts you just as much as it does me so I will not comment on it anymore. Needless to say, this unnerved us all, being that we were expecting them to come for all of us. At night, cruisers were driving by, some of them flashing their searchlights into the camp at two in the morning. We weren't doing anything wrong, not even by their bullshit standards.

Lastly, those three days were filled with paranoia at the seemingly inevitable police raid. The Council, in comments and at the meeting, stated that they would not talk with us and that we had to go, period. Steve Hall said that if we didn't leave then the police would come in. Rumors began to circulate. At 6 at night. Within 12 hours. Definitely in the middle of the night, probably 4 AM.

In retrospect, the police and City did an effective job at freaking us out. During those weary days, people with warrants or carrying children took off. Each time we heard a rumor everyone was on the phone, calling their friends and the media in order to get as many people to the site as possible. The corporate media eagerly descended from Seattle in order to get those juicy pictures of the cops busting up our camp. Strangely, I believe their presence kept the cops away on at least one of these nights, although I cannot be certain. Each of those rumors turned out to be false, though, and I think people got a little burnt after three days of preparing themselves for a confrontation.

On the second-to-last day the police gave us written warnings to leave or face arrest. On the back of the warning was a list of numbers for shelters that the residents of the camp could call. All of them were either out of service, full or impossible to get into quickly. After that, we began to look for another spot to house the encampment. A church was contacted and it seemed likely that they would let us. When the word finally came that we could in fact move to the church's property we informed the City that we would be moving. Nevertheless, the State had to flex its muscles and surround the encampment at 4:30 Friday morning. We were basically out of there already and we finished cleaning out the spot under the eyes of the cops. We left the spot cleaner than we found it.

Now we're at a new spot in West Olympia, being graciously put up by the Unitarian Universalist Church. They are not dogmatic and are truly good people. While the camp is no longer Downtown where more people can get to it, we still have a safe place to go. The community and the bonds that grew out of that first week are still alive and strong. The City and their hired thugs cannot destroy the trust we all now have for each other, and that trust is the most important thing to come out of the whole endeavor. Without it, we would not be able to continue. The new camp is up and we'll be up to more mischief later. But I can't tell you any more than that. Just keep your eyes peeled.

To contact the PPU write us an email at poorpeoplesunion@yahoo.com or, if ABSOLUTELY *necessary, call us at 925-285-5342.*

Camp Quixote residents and guests find ways to entertain themselves, despite the weather. February 7, 2006. Photo by Sandy Mayes.

Domestic Partnership
A First Step Toward Marriage Equality

by Janet Blanding

Domestic partnership looks almost certain to become a reality for same-sex couples in Washington state in the near future. House Bill 1351 and Senate Bill 5336 are both out of committee and have so many co-sponsors that only a few more votes will be needed for the bills to pass. When passed and implemented, a state domestic partnership registry will be created, which will provide registered couples with enhanced rights. Both same-sex couples, and couples where at least one partner is over 62, will be eligible to register as domestic partnerships. While a state registered domestic partnership does not offer anywhere near the same benefits as a civil union or marriage, it's a step in the right direction.

> "I want marriage for every citizen who wants it, with whomever they love. Fundamentally and civilly it is inappropriate for the state to decide who that can be."
> — *Olympia City Councilmember Jeff Kingsbury*

The rights granted by registered domestic partnership mostly pertain to medical and end-of-life situations, including: health care facility visitation rights, the ability to grant informed consent for a patient who is not competent, the right to have health care information disclosed to a partner on the patient's behalf, certain title and rights to cemetery plots and rights of internment, ability to authorize autopsies, the right to control disposition of the remains of a deceased person, ability to make anatomical gifts for a deceased partner, certain inheritance rights, and administration of estate if the partner dies without a will. Domestic partnership registration also enables the domestic partner of public employee the right to receive benefits coverage in some circumstances.

At the committee hearing for Senate Bill 5336, the prime sponsor Senator Ed Murray testified with his partner, Michael Shiosaki by his side. "Michael and I wished that after 15 years together that we were here this afternoon to ask you to allow us to marry," he said, "but until that discussion of marriage occurs in the not too distant future, we, like thousands of lesbian and gay families across the state, need protection now."

Testifier Charlene Strong provided moving testimony about the consequences of not having that protection. During the recent storms of December, 2006, Strong's wife, Katherine Fleming, drowned when the basement of their Seattle home flooded. After nearly losing her own life in an attempt to save her partner of ten years, Strong followed the ambulance carrying Fleming to Harborview Medical Center. Once there Strong recounted that since she was not a legally recognized spouse, "I was denied access to Katherine, to be by her side as she lay dying. As the minutes ticked by, I kept wondering, what if she dies without me holding her hand? What if she dies without me telling her I loved her?" Only after a family member could be located in Alexandria, Virginia, to give consent allowing Strong into the hospital room, was Strong able to sit by her partner's hospital bed. "I was able to tell Kate how beautiful she was, and how dearly I loved her, as she lay dying," Strong said.

Later, Strong encountered obstacles when she attempted to fulfill Fleming's wishes regarding organ donation, and at the funeral home where she went to make burial arrangements. "When I got there, the funeral director did not even shake my hand. He did not offer me any condolences. He looked directly at Mrs. Fleming, Kate's mother, and directed all of his questions to her. When I asked him to direct his questions to me, as I would be making all the funeral arrangements, he would not even look at me. He slid the cremation request over to Mrs. Fleming. At that point I left the room, and someone else took over making the arrangements."

While the domestic partnership registry will prevent such situations as the ones Strong encountered, there is much it will not do for same-sex couples. Marriage automatically confers over 1000 federal rights and 300 state rights, the majority of which will not be granted by domestic partnership. These rights include tax breaks, survivor and pension benefits, the right to bring a wrongful death suit, spousal privilege that makes it a duty not to testify against the spouse in legal matters, and many others. In addition, marriage has an emotional meaning that goes beyond rights conferred, which should not be denied to committed life partners simply because they are of the same sex.

Local gay activist Jeff Kingsbury says of the domestic partnership legislation that "it's certainly better than nothing." However, it's less than he's looking for. "I want marriage for every citizen who wants it, with whomever they love. Fundamentally and civilly it is inappropriate for the state to decide who that can be." Kingsbury and his partner were among the 19 couples who were litigants in a lawsuit against the state of Washington, challenging the 1998 Defense of Marriage Act. This summer, the Washington state Supreme Court split 5-4, narrowly upholding the state law banning same-sex marriage.

> Indeed, it appears possible that opponents of domestic partnership may be using the resources of the Stormans family in their efforts to defeat domestic partnership.

Other equal rights advocates share Kingsbury's feelings about domestic partnership. Equal Rights Washington states its position that "while domestic partnerships neither meet the basic legal needs of same-sex couples nor provide the dignity and intangible protections that marriage affords, they do provide some level of protection presently unavailable to same-sex couples and their children," and encourages the immediate creation of the domestic partnership registry.

True equality for same-sex couples will take more than the ability to register as domestic partnerships; many gay rights advocates feel that given the current make-up of the legislature, the time is right to ask for more. "I am certainly grateful that we have a legislature today that has the will to provide at least these protections to those who are in committed relationships," said Kingsbury. "However, I remain concerned that by not pushing at a time that we have the political will to do it, that we are going to close the door."

Opponents of gay rights, however, are afraid of that door being opened. A number of people testified in opposition to the House and Senate bills. Several suddenly developed an interest in preventing discrimination – against people other than same-sex couples. For instance, Bishop Joseph Tyson of the Washington State Catholic Conference testified that the Senate bill "unjustly discriminates against a wide swath of peoples in our state. This bill grants to domestic partners a package set of rights it fails to grant to the many other kinds of relationships that exist beyond the state's legal definition of marriage... A great variety of bonded relationships and various households exist outside of civil marriage, especially in our immigrant communities." Kingsbury characterized these remarks as "a disingenuous tool to try to undermine the intent of the bill."

At the hearing for House Bill 1351, Father Thomas Nathe presented Bishop Tyson's testimony. Representative Jamie Pedersen of Seattle, who is openly gay, followed up by remarking that he was delighted to see the groundswell of support for people not protected by legal marriage, and asked Father Nathe in what other ways the Catholic Conference was advocating for families outside the protection of marriage. Father Nathe had no answer.

Other opponents were more direct in their opposition to equal rights for gay and lesbian couples. Bob Higley, senior lobbyist for Positive Christian Agenda, testified at both the House and Senate hearings. Openly hostile to gay rights, even the relatively minor ones conferred by domestic partnership, he testified "the agenda of the homosexual agenda has advanced so homosexuality is taught as normal in our schools.... If you pass this bill, what is the next item to be considered to advance their agenda?" The official position of Positive Christian Agenda on domestic partnership legislation, as published on their website (http://www.positivechristianagenda.org/) states that "we see this as a critical bill for the eventual imposition of gay marriage upon an unwilling public."

Representative Brendan Williams (District 22), who is a co-sponsor of House Bill 1351, made the connection between Bob Higley, who has advocated strongly against domestic partnership, as well as other measures to ensure equal rights for GLBTQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and queer) people, and the Stormans family, who own Ralph's Thriftway and Bayview Thriftway supermarkets. (See sidebar.)

Indeed, it appears possible that opponents of domestic partnership may be using the resources of the Stormans family in their efforts to defeat domestic partnership. Daniel's House of Prayer, which does not have a city permit to run a house of worship or a home occupation, is apparently being used as a staging ground for people who testify in opposition of the domestic partnership legislation. Two women who signed in as opponents at the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing were observed walking directly from the hearing to Daniel's House of Prayer. After the House Committee hearing, Bob Higley was overheard inviting a group of people who testified in opposition to the legislation to come up to "the prayer house." Ken Stormans, who is President of Stormans, Inc., is Chairman of the Board of Daniel's House of Prayer. It is not clear how the "prayer house," a large, expensively decorated house with well-maintained grounds in an area where real estate values are high, is funded.

Despite opposition from the organized, well-financed opponents of gay rights, it is almost certain that the domestic partnership bill will pass and its limited collection of rights will soon become available to same-sex couples. Jeff Kingsbury points out that passage of "the equal rights bill did not create the catastrophe in the workforce that they suggested over and over in testimony that they said it would." He and other advocates of gay rights hope that once conservative lawmakers see that granting rights to same-sex couples causes no disasters, that heterosexual marriages do not crumble, and the sky doesn't fall, it will pave the way to greater equality, chiefly in the form of the right to form civil unions and marriages.

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Olympia City Councilmember TJ Johnson responds to the Council's resolution to end the US Occupation of Iraq

On February 6, the Olympia City Council unanimously passed a resolution calling on the President and members of Congress to end the Occupation of Iraq and bring our troops swiftly and safely home. Following the unanimous ratification of the resolution, Councilmember TJ Johnson offered these comments:

I am disappointed that this resolution is necessary.

I am disappointed at the Bush administration's arrogance, incompetence and unwillingness to listen to the clear majority of US citizens who believe that the Iraq war was a mistake and who have said that the time has come to end this national nightmare.

I am disappointed that the US Congress only yesterday refused to even debate a tepid non-binding resolution opposing the president's dangerous escalation of the war, and that Congress appears more interested in ensuring the continued flow of campaign contributions from defense contractors like Boeing than in exercising their constitutional obligation to curb the excesses of the executive branch by cutting off funds to this illegal and immoral war.

I am disappointed that the per capita cost to the residents of the City of Olympia for this war now equals $53 million (National Priorities Project). Had this money not been spent to kill men, women and children in a country that posed no threat to our citizens, it could have been used to:

- Build 478 units of affordable housing. This would have helped ensure that people were not forced to sleep in a downtown parking lot.
- Hire 921 public school teachers
- Provide 2,578 four year college scholarships. In other words, this money could have sent every graduate of both high schools in Olympia to college for four years.
- Send 7,045 preschoolers to Head Start for 1 year

I am disappointed that a Harvard Study released today estimates the lifetime costs of medical care and benefits for Iraq war veterans will exceed $700 billion. How this will be paid for has not yet even been considered.

I am disappointed that we will likely never know the total number of civilians killed in this war because in the words of former Defense Secretary and international war criminal Donald Rumsfeld, "we don't do body counts."

I am disappointed that the budget President Bush has submitted to Congress calls for an increase in defense spending of 11% to $481.4 billion, plus $245 billion more for Iraq & Afghanistan. This is more money than the rest of the world spends on the military combined.

I am disappointed that according to our own government's assessment the Iraq War has made Americans more vulnerable to a terrorist attack, while further eroding our civil liberties and our already fractured standing among the community of civilized nations.

When I took the oath of office as a member of this Council, I swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States. Article 6 of the Constitution states that all treaties made under the Authority of the United States shall be the Supreme Law of the Land. The Iraq War is a clear violation of the United Nations Charter, which only allows military action against another nation if done to counter an imminent threat of attack, or if authorized by the UN Security Council. The US attack on Iraq met neither of these conditions. Therefore it is a violation of the Constitution, and I am bound by my oath of office, as are all the members of this body, to oppose it.

So, of course I will vote in favor of this resolution, which I believe reflects the view of a clear majority of Olympia citizens. The sooner we end this tragedy the better, and if passing this resolution tonight helps achieve that goal then the time spent preparing and debating this resolution will have been time well spent.

But I am also disappointed that our national debate over the Iraq War appears to be based on the assumption that the United States is a peaceful country and a force for good and stability in the world, and that this war is somehow an aberration or an anomaly. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the Iraq War is the inevitable result of a political system that has become captive to the interests of multinational corporations and defense contractors, and a population obsessed with violence and systematically conditioned to live in a state of perpetual fear.

The reality is that the United States has become the most militaristic nation on the planet. Since World War II, the US has used violence and intimidation, as well as direct military intervention in dozens of countries, from Vietnam to Guatemala, the Balkans to Somalia, Panama to Libya. No other country even comes close.

93% of our foreign policy budget is controlled by the Pentagon; only 7% is administered by the State Department. Military budgets have steadily increased under both Republican and Democratic administrations, and now exceed the combined amount of all other federal discretionary programs combined. Bush's plan to increase the size of the military by an additional 92,000 soldiers and marines has drawn wide bipartisan support, with many calling for even larger increases.

> This nation routinely rejects its obligations under existing international treaties, such as the Geneva Convention, the Nuremberg Principles, the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty and the 1967 Space Treaty, when they are at odds with our military objectives.

The American military empire now includes over 700+ bases in over 100 countries. International concern about the reach of the US military is at an all time high, and has prompted the organizing of the first ever Conference for the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases, to be held next month in Quito, Ecuador.

This nation routinely rejects its obligations under existing international treaties, such as the Geneva Convention, the Nuremberg Principles, the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty and the 1967 Space Treaty, when they are at odds with our military objectives. Our national scientific, research and development programs are focused increasingly on designing even more horrific ways of destroying life than the lethal means we have already achieved.

Meanwhile US military contractors like Boeing and Raytheon rake in record profits, campaign contributions ensure that Congress keeps the contracts flowing, and the revolving door between private defense contractors and senior government officials now swings directly into the office of the Vice President.

In the final analysis, we have achieved precisely what President Eisenhower warned the nation about in his farewell address in 1961. The strength of the US military industrial congressional complex has become the dominant power on the planet, and a threat to our democracy and the very existence of continued life on this planet.

So while we take this small step tonight to demand that our federal officials act to end the War in Iraq, it is essential that we understand that unless all of us directly begin to address the underlying issue of what author Andrew Bacevich calls "The New American Militarism" wherever it rears its ugly little head, from the Port of Olympia to the textbooks used in our public schools to the surveillance and persecution of peaceful grassroots organizations, it is only a matter of time before we find ourselves opposing yet another war, with citizens of conscience again turning to their local City Council for the moral and courageous leadership so lacking in our statehouse and national capitol.

Visit **www.omjp.org** *to read the text of the Olympia City Council resolution.*

Applying the tools of democracy at the Port of Olympia

Port Militarization Resistance update

Olympia Port Militarization Resistance (PMR), a local grassroots organization, has launched a campaign to end the community's participation in the illegal and immoral occupation of Iraq. PMR seeks to prevent the US military from using the Port of Olympia to ship equipment to Iraq as part of President Bush's escalation of the conflict.

> "Through this campaign, we have a unique opportunity to show our community and our country that non-violent social change is possible, and that each of us has a role to play in ending the nightmare in Iraq." —TJ Johnson

Since the US invasion in 2003, the US Army has shipped equipment bound for Iraq through the Port of Olympia. The shipments to Iraq mark the first time in over fifteen years that the Port of Olympia has accepted military cargo.

According to Olympia City Councilman TJ Johnson, "a majority of Americans and local residents oppose the continued occupation of Iraq, and an even stronger majority oppose Bush's escalation. Using the Port of Olympia to ship equipment to Iraq goes against the will of the majority in the US and within our own community. Therefore, we have a democratic responsibility to resist."

PMR will use a continuum of actions to prevent military equipment from being shipped through the Port of Olympia. The continuum includes public education, targeted communication with key elected officials, non-violent civil disobedience, and a Festival of Life to celebrate the community's opposition to war and violence.

"We know that a strong majority of local residents oppose the war. Our campaign challenges people to think about how they want to focus their opposition. The continuum of actions provides a wide variety of ways for people to participate," said Sandy Mayes, a registered nurse who has worked in the Olympia community for 24 years.

According to the National Priorities Project, Thurston County's share of the cost for the invasion and occupation of Iraq exceeds $300 million. Dr. Muhammad Ayub, a member of the Green Party of South Puget Sound, notes that the money spent in Iraq would be better off invested at home to maintain infrastructure, improve education and health care services, and address critical problems like global warming. According to Ayub, "we have an economic obligation to resist the use of our port to support the occupation of Iraq."

Wes Hamilton, a Vietnam veteran and member of Veterans for Peace believes that "the best way to support the troops is to prevent them from being placed into the midst of a civil war where they have a high risk of killing or being killed. We have a moral and humanitarian obligation to resist the use of our port."

A critical aspect of the PMR campaign is an explicit commitment to non-violence. PMR has adopted a statement that affirms non-violent social change as a means for people to discover their own power, create democratic structures, and realize justice. The statement includes a pledge to refrain from physical assaults, verbal harassment and malicious sabotage. It also includes a commitment that all of its events and meetings are transparent, inclusive and democratic.

"Through this campaign, we have a unique opportunity to show our community and our country that non-violent social change is possible, and that each of us has a role to play in ending the nightmare in Iraq," said Johnson.

Thurston County will not finance Port security

During the last week of Feb, the campaign stepped up its efforts. Members of PMR met with Thurston County Sheriff Dan Kimball on Friday, Feb 23. The goal of the meeting was to open a line of communication between PMR and the sheriff's office in anticipation that the sheriff's office would provide security for military ship-

▸ **PMR** continued on next page

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Why we need reparations For Iraq

Iraq can enrich itself and the world with its potential

by Marco Rosaire Rossi

In Erbil, Iraq – high on top of Mount Korek in the northern part of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region – sits one of Iraq's dormant treasures. It's not oil, or natural gas, or any other natural resource that Iraq is known for; this dormant treasure of Iraq is science. On top of a 2,127 meter high mountain rests what would have been a first-rate observatory and the only major observatory in the Middle East. Built in 1973 for $160 million by president Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, this observatory had three telescopes, each one ranging in size from 1.25 to 3.5 meters. Its construction echoed back to the time when Islamic science and learning led the world in discovery and innovation. If it had succeeded in being fully functional, the astronomical contributions from the observatory would have not only benefited Iraq, but also the entire world.

Today, that dream is very distant. The observatory remains an empty shell: its walls full of gaping holes, its telescopes looted or hidden away, pieces of debris scattered within and around it. It's not a hub of science, it's another victim of war. Although its assault is in violation of international law, the observatory has been attacked twice by foreign forces. First in 1985, when Iraq and Iran were at war with each other (and the United States was funding both sides), and again in 1991, when US-led forces invaded Iraq in the first Gulf war.

In many ways the observatory on top of Mount Korek is a metaphor for Iraqi society as a whole. Iraq has had a history rich in science and culture that goes back to the ancients. Before the first Gulf War, Iraq was ahead of its neighbors in economic development and infrastructure. Before the UN Sanctions, the country offered some of the best healthcare in the Middle East. All of that has been squandered. After centuries of colonialism and decades of dictatorship and war, Iraq has become a country almost as hollow as the shell of the observatory on top of Mount Korek.

How can this scenario be changed? What needs to occur to rebuild Iraq? How can Iraq enrich itself and the world with its potential?

The obvious answer to this question is for massive reparations to be paid by those nations that have done Iraq the most harm. In recent history, the United States is at the top of this list. The US has played a major role in decimating Iraqi civil society and economic development for the past twenty years, and has done so in a variety of ways. First, through the political support and military funding of Saddam, then through playing an instigating role in Iraq's war with Iran, then through the first Gulf War invasion, then through a decade of brutal sanctions, and now through the current war and occupation of the country. If there is to be any justice for Iraq, US troops need to immediately come home and reparations need to immediately go out.

> "Bring the troops home" is only half the struggle. The other half is about what is left when they leave.

But neither of these things are happening. The Democrats may have been swept into office on the voters' anti-war sentiment, but they don't tend to share those views. They are not the peace party, and less so the justice party. The Democrats' plan for Iraq is to "win without war" through a strategy of "slow bleed." The idea behind "slow bleed" is to gradually limit the administration's ability to "stay the course" without threatening political alienation or disrupting corporate relations. Led by Rep. John P. Murtha, D-Pa, the party plans on avoiding an immediate withdrawal of US troops. It will drag out the conflict by gradually chipping away at the President's policy. An example of this approach is the recent supposed "anti-war" legislation introduced into the house by Murtha. He plans on adding a supplement to a spending bill on Iraq that would restrict the deployment of more troops unless they meet certain manpower, equipment and training levels to succeed in combat. Taken literally, Murtha legislation could escalate the conflict, not minimize it. The message of the Democrats to the American people is: "Bring our troops out of harm's way," not "Bring them home now."

In addition, nothing from the mainstream Democrats seriously addresses the independent reconstruction of Iraq. The only serious talk of reparations is what Iraq owes to the US and Kuwait for its invasion in 1991. Through the UN, the US pressured Iraq to pay $19 billion in reparations – with a large chunk going to American corporations. To this day, the US claims that Iraq owes $33 billion for the invasion of Kuwait under Saddam. On top of that, the United States is forcing the current Iraqi government to pay for reconstruction during the US occupation of the country. The message of the United States to the Iraqi people is: "We are going to break it, you are going to fix it."

What this all means is that even though the war in Iraq may end in a few years – meaning American troops will eventually pull out – the occupation of Iraq, be it political or economic, will continue indefinitely. Even now, members of the Iraqi government are looking to pass a new law that would not only open up the country's oil reserve to foreign investors, but also allow executives from those companies to sit on a Federal Oil and Gas Council that will oversee the development of oil production. This isn't government pandering to corporations – it's corporations becoming the government; and specifically, it's American corporations because they are the ones who are going to get those contracts from the foreign controlled Iraqi government. This law is essentially a form of reparations in reverse, where the wealth of a destroyed country is scavenged and picked by a foreign colonial power.

If Iraq is to be rebuilt, if there is to be justice in any meaningful sense of the word, then the mainstream discourse in American politics needs to change. A dialogue on reparations must begin. Iraq cannot be seen as a nation beyond hope, or as a place that has nothing to offer the world. This necessitates that the peace movement, too, must rethink its focus. Relying solely on the message "Bring the troops home now" ignores the plight of Iraqis and their need to live securely. "Bring the troops home" is only half the struggle. The other half is about what is left when they leave. Most importantly, we must acknowledge not just the political reasons for reparations, but also the overwhelming moral ones. All of us would benefit from a free and economically stable Iraq; we would benefit not just in the terms of what Iraq can contribute to the arts and science, but also to what Iraq can contribute to our sense of humanity.

▸ **PMR** continued from previous page

ments targeted for blockage by PMR. During the meeting, Kimball revealed that the County will not provide security unless Port officials guarantee reimbursement of all costs, and assume all liability for potential civil litigation that may arise from the protests.

"It was a very positive meeting," said Hamilton. "We support the County's position that the costs for these shipments should not be borne by County taxpayers."

Members of PMR also spoke at the Thurston County Commissioners' meeting on Feb 26, and at the Port Commission and Olympia City Council meetings on Feb 27. The lobbying is part of PMR's continuum of actions currently focused on public education and communication with key elected officials.

In his comments to the County Commissioners, Johnson thanked them for taking action consistent with the views of a majority of their constituents. Later Johnson added that "A strong majority of Thurston County residents oppose the ongoing occupation, and even more oppose Bush's escalation. The decision by the sheriff and the commissioners to end their support for the occupation is consistent with their obligations as democratically-elected representatives."

Civil disobedience workshops

While PMR is working aggressively to prevent military shipments bound for Iraq, it is also preparing for the potential that equipment will nevetheless be shipped through the Port of Olympia. The group plans to use non-violent civil disobedience to physically block such shipments.

PMR has organized several workshops to train community members interested in participating in civil disobedience. The first workshop is Sunday, March 4 from 10 AM to 6 PM at The Evergreen State College Seminar 2, Room E3105. The second workshop is Thursday Mar 8 and Friday March 9 from 5:30–8:30 PM. On Mar 8, the workshop will be at the United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE. The March 9 workshop will be at the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 2200 East End St NW.

Molly Gibbs, a local mother who has organized the workshops, encourages anyone planning to participate in civil disobedience to attend. According to Gibbs, "The workshops will provide skills to help all participants support each other in the spirit of non-violence agreed to by PMR."

Caitlin Esworthy, an Olympia resident and student at The Evergreen State College, plans to attend the workshops. "Non-violent civil disobedience is an important part of the continuum of actions to prevent the military's use of the port," said Esworthy. She added that "the workshops will help people learn techniques and strategies for applying some of the strongest tools of democracy — tools that have been historically used to win and secure our freedoms, such as civil rights, women's rights, and workers' rights."

PMR believes that its campaign will provide a powerful model for other communities seeking to end their participation in the occupation of Iraq. "Our efforts in Olympia can serve as an important beacon of hope and inspiration for other communities frustrated by the ongoing violence in Iraq," said Mayes.

The PMR campaign is endorsed by Veterans for Peace #109 (Rachel Corrie Chapter), Olympia Chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War, Green Party of South Puget Sound, Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace, Students for a Democratic Society, Olympia Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Committee.

Civil Disobedience Workshops

The workshop will be offered twice to train community members in nonviolent direct action. There is an option of either an all-day workshop or a two-evening workshop.

Sunday, Mar. 4, from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm at The Evergreen State College Seminar 2, Room E3105.

The next two dates constitute a single workshop split into two evening sessions:

Thursday, Mar. 8, from 5:30to 8:30 pm at the United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE.

Friday, Mar. 9, from 5:30 to 8:30pm at the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 2200 East End St NW.

Free and open to everyone, regardless of skill or experience. Donations are appreciated but not necessary. Sponsored by Olympia Port Militarization Resistance (PMR). The Evergreen event is co-sponsored by SDS Olympia and EPIC student groups.

▸ **Resist** continued from page 1

soldiers when their mission is to protect access to oil.

A majority of Americans and local residents oppose the continued occupation of Iraq, and an even stronger majority opposes President Bush's escalation. Using the Port of Olympia to ship equipment to Iraq goes against the will of the majority in the US and within our community. Therefore, we have a democratic responsibility to resist.

The occupation of Iraq is a violation of the US constitution and international law. Allowing our publicly financed Port to be used to support the occupation is a violation of Nuremberg Principles and makes our community subject to legal consequences. Therefore we have a legal obligation to resist.

The best way to support soldiers is to prevent them from being placed into the midst of a civil war where they have a high risk of killing and being killed. Therefore we have a moral and humanitarian obligation to resist.

We have developed and intend to pursue a continuum of actions designed to achieve our goal of non-violently blocking the next shipment. There will be a wide range of people -- students, mothers, veterans, military families, laborers and grandparents, musicians, poets, gardeners and engineers, involved. This is how the will of the people can be demonstrated and understood. We share a humanitarian desire to stop endless killing and destruction. We choose to end violence as an accepted way of life, and as the accepted way to manage a shortage of resources.

Molly Gibbs is a mother who lives in Olympia and is actively involved in a number of local organizations devoted to working for peace.

End the war with George Bush jokes

by Sergei Holmes

Let us travel back to the war-weary town of Belsec in 1940 where we see three young Polish adults standing on a street corner. The first attracts your attention with his gesticulations and comical mannerisms. The other two, a tall man and skinny woman, stand bemused looking at what you gradually assume to be the funny imitator of the three. You realize it's a Hitler imitation, so perfect that Charlie Chaplin would take notes. The other two can't contain their laughter, which is loud enough to almost supersede the roar of a train in the background carrying Jews to the death camp.

It's going to happen soon, I just know it. A convoy of military tanks headed to Iraq are going to roll through Plum Street downtown and cross a nearby residential house where some guy inside is laughing along to the *Daily Show*. "Right on, Jon Stewart. You tell those Fox News idiots what's up" or "Gawd, George W. Bush is such a moron," he might say, oblivious to the background drone outside.

Then the convoy will pass another house with a woman watching online flash animation her friend made of cowboy Bush roping the Democrat Leadership Council onto his vacation ranch. She laughs, it's funny. And just as the convoy turns off Plum, headed for the port, a nearby house of roommates begins the second season on DVD of *That's My Bush*.

Twenty or thirty years from now, the younger generations will have no idea how much damn satisfaction the US public took from the Bush II years. They'll remain clueless because, hey, who's going to bother reminiscing at the bread lines outside Wal-Mart? Privately, us elders might exchange choice Stephen Colbert interviews – "Remember that part where he just stared at that guy, with his eyebrow raised?" – but maybe we'll do it openly wondering whatever happened to the movement on the streets.

There's a debate surfacing among those content to argue (the mainstream media) about the "therapeutic irony" of the *Daily Show* rendering us "politically impotent." Of course, when this debate surfaces on a corporate network like MSNBC, we all know they're the lame press and that the cool Viacom, er, Daily Show press tells what's really going on in the world with an irresistible smirk.

The self-importance of this debate and media analysis of satire as a mobilizing force clings to the sentiment that an alternative undercurrent in capitalism is here to whisk you away from the identifiable ills of society. Jon Stewart "clings to the truth, Gandhi-style" states a column from Minnesota professor Kelly Rae Kramer and "he's pointing us in the right direction." Even *The Olympian* dedicated a top front page story to local Congressman Brian Baird when interviewed on the *Colbert Report* in January. Mainstream media sure is horrible but at least my cable satire program substitutes as real news. Okay? Thomas Frank wrote a thorough book called "The Conquest of Cool" about the advertising revolution during the 1960s and how it became almost essential for commercialism to co-opt the radical, broad movement of people expressing their ideals beyond the encouraged nuclear family structure. Cosmetic products hypocritically adopted feminist slogans and so on.

As long as you bristle at this article and defend your privilege to laugh we can continue along our own alienated paths of awareness that don't lead to action. Besides, it's not like I haven't missed a Tom Tomorrow comic strip in years. Make no mistake. These are not the ramblings of a humorless activist with holier-than-thou morals, bearded and hacking away on his big Brother typewriter at an isolated cabin...yet. But every time some friend calls me over to watch a YouTube clip from their laptop involving a character named Ali G. interview Noam Chomsky (check it out, dude!), I can't help but absentmindedly wonder who's dying in Iraq right now and for what. There must be something wrong with me. I should just loosen up. Until I realize it took a complacent public six years to raise the slow-moving issue of impeachment to the Bush administration, when we should have started back in Florida 2000.

I believe there's a current level of desperation, both institutional and personal, behind our urge to laugh off the worries of the world and maintain the status quo.

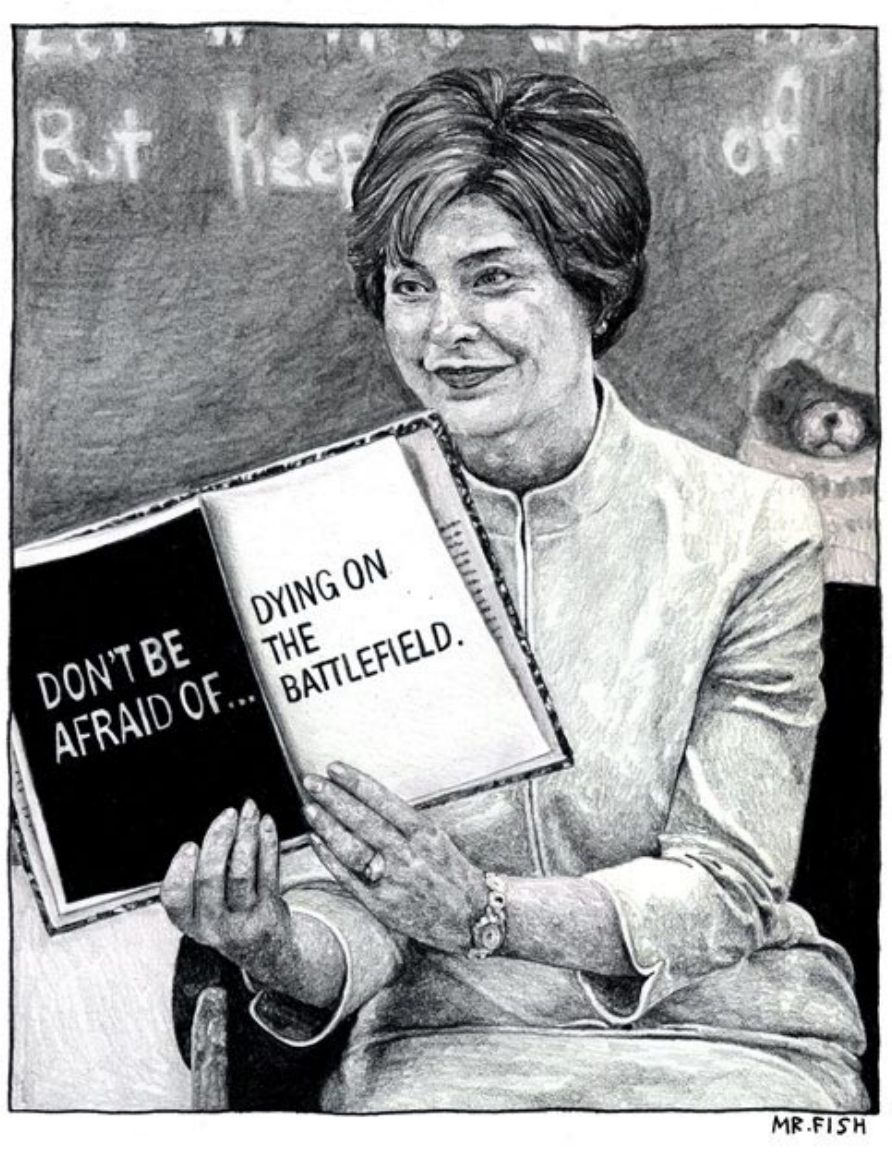
Perhaps we can all agree on this: Satire is the most passive form of dissent. As an entertainment-seeking society, our peak hurrah came from Stephen Colbert's roasting of President George W. Bush, two seats away, at a 2006 White House Correspondents Dinner. Colbert came far closer to telling Bush of our frustrations than we ever will from our "free speech zones". But it wasn't much of a confrontation when watched unedited, more the comfortable assemblage of press and government momentarily disoriented. The same assemblage that merrily laughed along two years earlier when Bush performed, in an election year, his infamous slideshow of looking for "weapons of mass destruction" in the Oval Office. A photo of the president looking under his desk and narrating "maybe under here?" Why he hasn't shown this slide show to cheer up the mothers of dead soldiers must go beyond the ponderous scope of those satisfied dinner attendants.

GEORGE BUSH CONDENSING HIS NEW IRAQ STRATEGY DOWN TO A SINGLE SENTENCE: REMEMBER YOUR CHEERLEADING DAYS AT YALE AND KEEP SAYING "FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!" WITH A BIG DUMB GRIN ON YOUR FACE WHILE IGNORING THE -3000 ON THE SCOREBOARD.
MR. FISH

Satire hasn't initiated much wide-scale dissent in quite some time now. A Megan Boler article in *Counterpunch* defends *The Daily Show* phenomenon and praises the satiric virtues of "Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*," Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* – all of these led to new public awareness that then led to protest, even some pragmatic reforms." Hopefully, your great-grandparent can further explain to you how these books impacted society. As for our visual medium of movies and television, society's witty outlets have failed repeatedly to initiate social change. *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) didn't allow society to offer "pragmatic reforms" to the nuclear crisis, *Network* (1976) didn't lead "new public awareness" to protest corporate media.

I believe there's a current level of desperation, both institutional and personal, behind our urge to laugh off the worries of the world and maintain the status quo. It's the same institutional desperation that informs you about the nuances to Britney Spears' shaved head or the corpse of Anna Nicole Smith while the war gets bloodier. It's the same personal desperation that cheers on our court jesters in front of the king while we privately consider the possibilities of advocacy or protest. Satire compels us to become knowledgeable about our society, that way we 'get the joke'. But what happens when humor becomes not just a release but apparently essential to our nation's well-being? Especially since "the joke" has been on us for a long time. Bush's slideshow pointed that out and it shouldn't take comedian Al Franken's earnest run at Senate to realize bigger steps need to be taken. So, dance, court jesters, dance! Meanwhile, I have a tank to go sit down in front of at the port.

Sergei Holmes is an Olympia activist and member of the Nanny State Underground, infiltrating school districts across the country.



End US imperial wars!

Speech given at Ehren Watada rally

by Peter Bohmer

Growing resistance inside and outside the U.S. military, together with the Vietnamese resistance to the U.S. occupation in Vietnam forced the U.S. to withdraw from Vietnam. We can and will do the same in Iraq, hopefully sooner than later.

The Bush administration has given many reasons for its invasion and occupation of Iraq:

First: regime change, which actually began under Clinton; then supposed WMD including nuclear weapons, also Iraq government support for 9/11 and Al Qaeda; and since April, 2003—bringing democracy to Iraq, then rebuilding it, then stopping a Civil War inside Iraq and a bloodbath if we withdrew; and now stopping a regional war and Middle East instability; and/or stopping Iran expansionism. The only constant is the lies and that the destruction of Iraqi society continues and worsens-deaths, lack of electricity and water, unemployment, insecurity and unimaginable and growing violence, almost two million fleeing the country.

What is behind the U.S. invasion and continued occupation? It is not a mistake; unfortunately U.S. covert and overt intervention to dominate other countries economically and politically to serve the profits of U.S. corporations has shaped U.S. foreign and military policy for over 100 years and in the Middle East for 70 years.

The word for this is U.S. imperialism, which is about controlling the oil, its exploration and marketing by Exxon and Chevron; to create a neoliberal Iraq where taxes on rich Iraqis and foreign corporations are low, production is for profit, privatization, so-called free trade and most goods are imported, an unequal and unjust Iraq. U.S. policy makers also hope to create permanent military bases in Iraq to control the Middle East and to turn the region into this neoliberal model—Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria. These are neoconservative delusions. They have not been successful but they haven't given up.

Our response must be demanding, immediate and complete U.S. withdrawal, no U.S. military bases. The only acceptable U.S. role is payment of reparations to the Iraqi people, paid for by taxes on those have so obscenely profited, like Halliburton, and distributed to the Iraqis through neutral non U.S. agencies. If Iraqi people want peacekeepers, Arab League, UN should provide them. U.S. isn't and shouldn't be trusted.

What about a bloodbath if the U.S. withdraws? It is already happening. The U.S. military occupation makes it worse daily. Let Iraqi groups who are concerned about Iraq negotiate with each other for a peaceful Iraq. The U.S. withdrawal will isolate those involved in sectarian killing. Moreover, a major cause of violence —the attacks on the U.S., and U.S. aggression and returning massive firepower to these attacks will end. There are no easy answers but the U.S. continued presence makes the situation for Iraqis more dangerous and deadly daily. We cannot be part of the solution,

The war is wrong; winning should not be the goal. For the most part, the Democrats, the Iraqi study group disagree with the Bush administration only on tactics, how to maintain some control—e.g., of oil, they ask the wrong questions. Our principled position must be like Ehren Watada—the war is wrong and immoral. Our demand is for total U.S. withdrawal, before May Day, and support for military resisters. So the war is more than just bad policy.

Support the U.S. troops-must mean also calling for U.S. withdrawal and ending the War—otherwise our only concern is U.S. lives and we are not valuing Iraqi lives as equal to U.S. lives, 700,000 plus Iraqis dead by now. Let us mourn each one of these Iraqis and also mourn the more than 3000 U.S. soldiers and the hundreds of their allies killed and many times that number on both sides wounded for life.

Most people join the military here because of limited economic opportunities for themselves and their families. We should support the troops by organizing to create alternatives to enlisting by working for universal, single-payer health care, by fighting racism, by winning living wage jobs for all and the right to organize unions as most troops are working class people who are facing with their families an unjust and unequal society when they return. So supporting the troops means working for economic and social justice at home as we challenge this war and possible future wars, like in Iran. It also means supporting those who resist.

Our response must be demanding, immediate and complete US withdrawal, no US military bases.

The estimates for the indirect and direct costs of the war are 2 trillion dollars and rising, $20,000 per household in the U.S. and many times more than that in Iraq plus the deaths, which do not have a price tag. Think what that money could do if it funded human needs, like day care, health care, education, etc.

I am struck by how similar U.S. government strategy is in Iraq and New Orleans—privatization of schools, militarization, destruction of housing, not valuing the lives of poor people in New Orleans or the Iraqi people, racism. We need to connect the war at home to the one in Iraq in building movements for economic and social justice and peace. For example, I urge that people support and visit the Tent City in downtown Olympia on State and Columbia where homeless people and their allies have built a peaceful tent city. Support their demands that the repressive, anti-street people, laws that went into effect on February 1st that outlaw panhandling, sitting on the sidewalk and playing music without a license in downtown be repealed and that more affordable housing be built.

The Democrats, if elected, are not without a strong movement in the streets going to end the war in Iraq nor create a decent society at home. At best, they can be pressured to do the right thing a little bit easier than the Republicans. We are living in a period where the majority of people in the U.S. strongly oppose the war. They are looking for people like Ehren Watada, war resister like Darrell Anderson, Agustin Aguayo, Suzanne Swift, and many other courageous individuals, and everyone here today to stand up and be bold and to give guidance by their actions and deeds on how to end this obscene war. We need to build on this week's actions to build a stronger and more inclusive anti-war movement that uses all tactics, from teach-ins to petitions to lobbying to large rallies to massive legal demonstrations to civil disobedience to protests, such as trying to stop war supplies that flow through our ports in Olympia and Tacoma, where we put our bodies on the line to stop this war and future ones and build a sustainable and just society based on need not greed.

Talk to and encourage your friends, families, neighbors, coworkers to take small and big steps for justice and peace. Support Ehren Watada, Support Iraq Vets Against the War, and all resisters, inside and outside the U.S. military to this unjust war.

Power to the People. Thank You!!

This is a slightly edited version of talk by Peter Bohmer at an anti-war, support Ehren Watada Rally at gates of Ft. Lewis. Monday, 2/05/07

Harsh sanctions for families on welfare

On March 1, 2007 thirty-one families with children living in poverty lost their welfare grants. Thus begins the most mean-spirited welfare reform policy this state has yet known: full family sanction. It means the end of a cash grant for families receiving welfare assistance who are perceived as not following the rules for WorkFirst. A steady flow of families will face full family sanction in the next 6 months, and as many as 1,269 may lose their cash income.

Many parents report being sanctioned due to caseworker error, miscommunication or barriers outside their control that prevent their participation. DSHS's own study of 500 families in sanction in 2005 showed that nearly half of the sanctioned families had transportation barriers, nearly a third had no childcare or medical issues that prevented them from participating.

When Governor Gregoire asked DSHS to audit their sanction cases and cure the illegal or unfair sanctions last year, more than half had their full benefits restored; the number of families in sanction went from 2,660 in January 2006 to 1,279 in July 2006. Unfortunately the sanction numbers are rising and few parents or advocate trust that the Governor's Statewide Review Panel, made up of three former DSHS employees, is going to provide the unbiased oversight needed to prevent families who should not be in sanction from losing their benefits. To learn more, visit:

Full Family Sanction: Faces and Voices From the Welfare Zone an exhibit of photos and audio stories from from Washington families facing welfare cuts. Bryce's Barbershop, 118 4th Avenue. The exhibit will be available for the month of March during barbershop hours, roughly Tuesday - Friday 10-ish to 5:00 pm, and Saturday mornings.

If you are a parent facing sanction and need to know your rights, please contact us!

Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition
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Mistrial declared as Army's case flounders

Watada follows military rules on dissent

by Colonel (Retired) Ann Wright

Courage is not only shown on the battlefield by military personnel. It takes guts and courage for a soldier to refuse to deploy to Iraq with his unit because he believes the war is illegal. Very few in our country resign from their careers, much less risk imprisonment, on a point of principle and conscience.

First Lt. Ehren Watada is the latest in a series of war resisters. He went in front of a military court-martial for his belief that the war in Iraq is a war of aggression based on untruths told to the American public and Congress. As a war of aggression, Watada has characterized the war as a crime against peace, and hence, according to international law, a war crime. Going to Iraq would make him complicit in a war crime. Two other US Army soldiers will be court-martialed within the next month for their opposition to the Iraq War, making seventeen who have faced jail rather than compromise their conscience.

> Very few in our country resign from their careers, much less risk imprisonment, on a point of principle and conscience.

I attended Lieutenant Watada's general court-martial February 5, 6 and 7, 2007, at Fort Lewis, Washington. The military law judge, Lt. Col. John Head, declared a mistrial on the third day of the trial before the defense had presented its case. While Watada stipulated the fact that he missed his unit's deployment to Iraq, he pled not guilty to the charge, as he maintained he did not have criminal intent in refusing to deploy, but instead his refusal was to prevent his complicity in a war crime. As to the stipulation of fact that he had spoken in a public forum in June and August, he would argue that his statements about the illegality of the war were based on facts provided by international law experts, Congressional testimony and comments by retired general officers.

The defense was to consist of only two witnesses, one of whom was to be Watada himself. Eight witnesses, including leading international war experts and analysts, had been struck from the defense witness list by the judge in a January 2007 pre-trial hearing. The judge ruled that evidence concerning the legality of the war on Iraq was off-limits during the trial. As one can imagine, the courtroom dance of not mentioning the "ultimate question," of whether a soldier can question the legality of a war, proved to be an incredible obstacle to justice in the case of a military officer facing prison time for his beliefs.

The US Army prosecution called only three witnesses to meet its burden of providing evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that Lieutenant Watada had failed to deploy to Iraq and had committed conduct "unbecoming an officer" for public statements about the Iraq war he made in June and August 2006.

Ironically, in my opinion, the testimony of the prosecution witnesses underscored Lieutenant Watada's professionalism, dedication to duty and respect for the chain of command as he attempted to resolve his ethical and moral concerns about the war. In effect, prosecution witnesses undercut the prosecution's own case against Watada before the jury panel of seven US Army officers.

Prosecution witness Richard Swain, a retired US Army colonel and currently professor of "Officership" at the US Military Academy, West Point, said that an officer is under no obligation to obey unlawful orders. An officer is charged with the responsibility of making a determination whether an order is lawful or unlawful. According to Swain, when an officer believes that an order conflicts with his responsibility as an officer, he must do what his conscience tells him. But, the officer must be willing to be held accountable if he is wrong in his analysis of the order. Swain said that the military teaches officers to be "creative and critical thinkers." He also said that an officer takes an oath to defend the Constitution of the United States, not a particular person or policy.

Swain said that in one's career, an officer may come to different conclusions than his/her commander on an issue. Swain said that military tradition requires that the officer attempt first to work out the difference with his commander. Swain added that an officer may get advice from his peers, officers he respects, mentors and military lawyers on the issue under debate. He may also go to the next higher commander for resolution of the differences or to the Inspector General. If none of those attempts to resolve the differences are successful, Swain said, the officer may "appeal for redress" or submit his resignation. If an officer offers to resign on principle on a particular issue and the resignation is not accepted, then, Swain noted, the oath continues.

It appears to me that Lieutenant Watada explicitly followed the principles of "Officership" as described by Colonel Swain, the prosecution expert witness.

In the autumn of 2005, upon learning of his unit's scheduled deployment to Iraq in June 2006, Watada, on the advice of his commander, began reading about Iraq and the war. As more and more information emerged in late 2005 on the history of the Bush administration's decision to wage war on Iraq, Watada became convinced that the war was illegal. He talked with his battalion and brigade commanders about his concerns in January 2006 and sent them a formal letter of his views on January 25, 2006, six months before the unit's scheduled deployment to Iraq. His commanders advised him that, despite his concern on the illegality of the war, the unit's deployment orders were lawful. Watada respectfully disagreed with his superiors' assessment and twice submitted requests for resignation. Because of the strength of his concerns about the war, his commanders reassigned him from his platoon in anticipation that he really would refuse to deploy with the unit. After his second request to resign was denied by his commanders and his request to be assigned to a unit in Afghanistan was denied, he decided he must make his concerns public.

> I urge the Army to let the lieutenant, who has acted in good faith, with courtesy and respect for the military and responsibility for his oath to the military and to the country, resign.

His commanders told him they would rather he not make public statements, but if he did, he could not make statements in uniform or on-base, and that he must be respectful of the chain of command. Additionally, they told him he must talk with the public affairs officer at Fort Lewis. After the conversation with his commanders, Watada went directly to that office for further guidance.

In his testimony for the prosecution, Watada's battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Antonia, said that "a soldier has an obligation to determine if an order is unlawful, a criminally illegal order." He added that "the chain of command looks at an order and makes a decision on whether it is legal or not. If the chain of command says the order is legal, then the officer must obey." Antonia said when Watada went public, he, Antonia, was "angry and felt betrayed by Watada's opinions and his statement that he would rather go to jail than serve in an illegal war." Antonia questioned how a lieutenant in the Army would know whether the president made a decision to go to war based on lies. When defense attorney Eric Seitz asked Antonia if Watada was citing the same evidence about the war that was being publicly discussed by retired generals, congressmen and women, the judge told Seitz to "move on," that he was bringing up an issue too close to the "ultimate question."

Despite his concerns about the war from July 2005 to June 2006, his battalion and brigade commanders said he performed his duties in a professional manner, including participating in his unit's pre-deployment training at the National Training Center (NTC) in March 2006. He had followed the instructions and advice provided by his command. He was speaking publicly, but under the guidance of the Fort Lewis public affairs officer.

After returning from training at NTC, the Army recognized that Watada was serious and sincere in his decision not to go to Iraq. His unit commander had him reassigned from a platoon leader position to a staff job so that Watada's platoon would have time to bond with its new leader.

Watada's battalion and deputy brigade commander said that Watada's actions did not negatively affect the unit, although there was much discussion in the unit about Watada's decision not to deploy and his public statements. No other soldier in the unit followed Watada's example to decide not to deploy with the unit to Iraq. No other soldier went public with concerns about the war. As happens in every war, for most soldiers, bonds among friends going to war overcome whatever political discussions and debates rage about the war itself. Only seventeen military personnel will have been court-martialed for refusing to deploy to Iraq. Hundreds have been administratively discharged, and over 300 soldiers are in Canada in protest of the war in Iraq.

The Army's case against Lieutenant Watada is a mess. The testimony of the prosecution's own witnesses made a strong case for Lieutenant Watada's professionalism and respect for military customs, courtesy and traditions when one dissents from a policy.

As an old soldier with nearly three decades of service, I suggest that the "good order and discipline" of the Army has not been negatively affected by Lieutenant Watada's actions. Until his unit deployed to Iraq on June 22, Watada had not disobeyed an order from his command. He did not go AWOL. After he was charged, he worked professionally and diligently every day while awaiting his court-martial.

I urge the Army to let the lieutenant, who has acted in good faith, with courtesy and respect for the military and responsibility for his oath to the military and to the country, resign.

US Army Colonel (Retired) Ann Wright served 13 years on active duty and 16 years in the reserves. As a US diplomat, she served in Nicaragua, Grenada, Somalia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Micronesia, Sierra Leone and Mongolia. She helped reopen the US Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, in December 2001. She resigned from the US diplomatic corps in March 2003 in opposition to the Bush administration's war on Iraq. Her letter of resignation can be read at www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0303/032103wright.htm

Retired Army colonel and State Department diplomat Ann Wright demonstrates outside of Fort Lewis at the start of Lt. Watada's court martial on February 5. Photo by Jeff Paterson.

How Lt. Watada & the GI resistance movement beat the Army

by Jeff Paterson

In the Army court martial of First Lieutenant Ehren K. Watada, the first officer to publicly refuse to fight in Iraq, military judge Lieutenant Colonel John Head orchestrated a legal mulligan. The prosecution had just rested a poorly argued case before the jurors. This "do over" proclamation appeared to offer the government a chance to get their act together and try again in the spring. However, given the likelihood that the entire case against Lt. Watada will eventually be dismissed due to the constitutional protection against double jeopardy, the question is why?

Lt. Watada never had a chance to take the stand in his own defense. Yet, on the basis of prosecution's case alone, where appeared little hope for the Army that they would win a conviction on either of the two "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" charges. These stemmed from two of Lt. Watada's numerous public statements in opposition to the "illegal Iraq War" and the conduct of the Bush administration in selling the war.

What if the most vocal active duty opponent to the Iraq War were to be acquitted of making "unbecoming" statements? This would send a clear message to all of the troops now in the middle of an unpopular occupation war that public political speech is allowable—or at least legally defendable. This alone may have given the judge pause.

The principle "crime" Lt. Watada stood trial for was "missing movement" to Iraq with the Fort Lewis-based First Stryker Brigade. Even with a number of military jurors apparently open minded towards Lt. Watada's stand, it is more than likely he would have been convicted of this charge. Although "intent" was not an element of the missing movement charge, the prosecution itself entered into evidence that Lt. Watada was intending to resist an illegal war, and refusing an illegal order to deploy in the process, by way of charging him for "unbecoming" speech. While the defense was barred from presenting this kind of evidence, the prosecution did it for them. Ironically, the prosecution did so well, it was enough to throw the entire outcome into question.

In military court martials, following the guilt phase of the trial, a separate mini-trial of sorts immediately follows to decide on punishment. During this phase, the defense has greater latitude in types of evidence that can be admitted.

Even if convicted of missing movement, the jury as selected seemed willing to take into account Lt. Watada's clearly articulated and consistent beliefs in sentencing. A likely outcome of the trial, had the judge allowed it to continue, might have been six months or less in the stockade. The Army clearly wanted the maximum two years allowable for missing movement, given they initially charged Lt. Watada with "crimes" totaling over six years in prison.

In December 2005, Navy sailor Pablo Paredes was convicted of publicly refusing to ship out to the Persian Gulf region from San Diego. However, Petty Officer Paredes was eventually sentenced to no prison time or discharge after the judge declared Paredes' belief that the Iraq War was illegal "reasonable." As I sat in the Fort Lewis court room last week, I began to wonder if something similar was about to unfold.

Judge Lt. Col. John Head may have been thinking the same thing. While cloaking his actions in complex and bizarre rulings, Judge Head seemed to have made the following decision: It would be in the military's best interests to attempt retrial at a later date, after the prosecution got its act together. Judge Head may have anticipated the chance that higher courts would toss the case altogether based on the constitutional prohibition against double jeopardy. In his haste, Judge Head may have underestimated the clear nature of double jeopardy (prosecuting someone twice for the same charges) applying to future proceedings.

> Double jeopardy doesn't apply to defendants who cause or request a mistrial, but it certainly does when the government requests a mistrial for their own benefit, over the objections of the defense, as in this case.

Double jeopardy doesn't apply to defendant's who cause or request a mistrial, but it certainly does when the government requests a mistrial for their own benefit, over the objections of the defense, as in this case.

If Judge Head's judgment was clouded that day, it was certainly for good reason. His court room is not usually the focus of national and internationally media. He has probably never had a defense lawyer challenge his dubious actions and correct him on matters of court martial procedures. The defendant usually doesn't have a thousand supporters rallying at the fort gates, and tens of thousands more writing letters and holding vigils. And the prosecution's subpoenas are not usually condemned by the nation's largest journalistic freedom advocacy organizations. In fact, it was the "stipulation of facts" agreement written by the prosecution in order to side-step the controversial subpoenas of journalists that played an important role in Judge Head's mistrial.

Would Judge Head have staged the mistrial even if double jeopardy was certain? I believe, beyond a doubt, "probably." Under national and internationally attention, Lt. Watada and the GI resistance movement would have claimed a significant legal and unqualified moral victory had Lt. Watada been sentenced to a few months in jail. A few months in jail for standing up to the entire weight of the U.S. military by articulating his beliefs to millions globally and, of course, not deploying to a brutal, endless occupation war for empire. Indeed, many service persons would be tempted to make such a deal.

Now we need to compel the Army to accept Lt. Watada's resignation sooner than later. In the end, the military will spin our victory as, "a lucky bum who beat a rap on a technicality." They will tell any troops considering a similar course of action, "Don't count on you being so lucky." With over a thousand active duty troops having recently signed a public "appeal for redress" to congress demanding that they end the war in Iraq now, it might be too late.

On Feb. 23, the Army re-filed charges of missing movement and conduct unbecoming an officer against Lt. Watada. The second court-martial has been set for July 16, with pretrial motions set for May 20–21. Lt. Watada's attorney has already stated his intent to file a motion for dismissal due to double jeopardy. For information on how you can support Lt. Watada, visit www.thankyoult.org

Navy veteran Wally Cuddeford and Iraq war veteran Tina Bean march with 2000 other Watada supporters to the gates of Fort Lewis.

A letter from Lt. Watada to supporters

To Key Organizers,

Thank you for the skills, expertise, and tremendous sacrifice that you invested in the mobilization of support for my case and that of all war resisters. I ask you to please remain focused and committed until the Army realizes it has indeed lost this fight. Make no mistake, the Army can choose to lose small by immediately granting my resignation; or they can lose big when they are forced to drop all charges due to double jeopardy, promote me to Captain, and grant me an honorable discharge anyway. Even in the off-chance that they succeed in re-trying me, public opposition to this war (including the military) grows daily, congressional investigations bring more information to light, and we will have 5 more months to add to the groundwork that has already been laid.

The Army refuses to admit that public opinion affects them directly. However, there is no doubt the intense media coverage, the 1500-plus supporters who lined I-5 and the dozens of supporters who crammed the ridiculously small court room had an impact on Ft. Lewis personnel. People may not vote generals into office, but the Army is made up of people, and people will be affected when they see hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands of their fellow citizens supporting a soldier who publicly opposes this war. I have been approached numerous times by military of various ranks, military dependents and Army civilians who support and agree with my decision. Your support and commitment is not only for me, but hundreds of others who comprise the US Armed Forces.

Let us not forget the other war resisters who are facing court martials and lengthy imprisonments: Spec. 4 Augustín Aguayo, Spec. 4 Mark Wilkerson, and other brave, patriotic soldiers whose names we may never know but who have nonetheless chosen to take a stand and refuse to be complicit in this illegal and immoral war. These troops have taken the road less traveled. Even though it is an arduous, difficult, and lonely path—it is one that they are entitled to follow. Please help spread word of their plight. Keep the flame of hope alive.

Sincerely,
First Lt. Ehren Watada

To support more war resisters such as Augustín Aguayo and Mark Wilkerson, visit couragetoresist.org

The crowd of Watada supporters stretched from Iafrati Park in DuPont, over the Exit 119 overpass above I-5, and up to the gates of Fort Lewis. Photo by Sasha Crow.

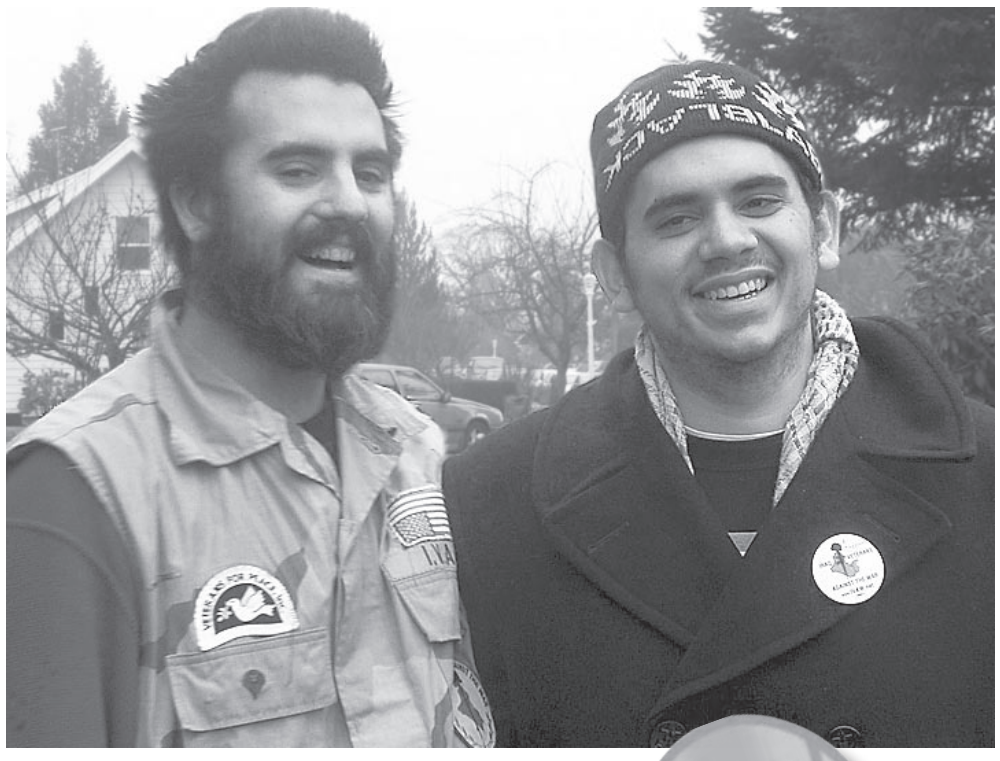
WORKS IN PROGRESS

March 2007

FREE

Volume 17, No. 11

Camp Quixote deliberates on proposed new City Hall location



Darrell Anderson of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW)–Portland, and Chanan Suarez-Diaz of IVAW–Seattle outside of Fort Lewis, at the rally in support of Lt. Ehren Watada on the first day of his court martial. (Photo by Sasha Crow)

See related stories on pages 10 and 11.

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